

October 21, 2004

MEMORANDUM FOR: AIS Observers

FROM: David Potter
Branch Chief, FSB

SUBJECT: Skate Sampling Priorities

The Northeast Skate Complex Fishery Management Plan was enacted in September 2003 to prevent over fishing of skate resources in Northwest Atlantic waters. As a result, possession and landing restrictions now exist for several skate species. The Northeast Fisheries Observer Program's sampling priorities have been updated to assist in the monitoring and analysis of skate stock rebuilding.

The most significant fisheries impacted by these updates are the **groundfish bottom longline fishery** and the **sea scallop fishery**. New biological sampling manuals reflecting these changes may not be issued for several months, however the enclosed updated tables should be carefully reviewed and the appropriate skate length sampling should begin as soon as possible in all fisheries.

Additionally, it is no longer necessary to obtain individual animal information on cownose and bullnose rays. As a result, these two species are not recorded on Individual Animal Logs but should now be recorded in the species section of the appropriate Haul Log.

For additional information, please contact your editors or Gina M.R. Shield at 508-495-2221 or Gina.Shield@noaa.gov.

Thank you.

NEFOP Memo-04-014

Species	Length Frequencies		Age Structures		Species	Length Frequencies		Age Structures	
	Kept	Discard	Kept	Discard		Kept	Discard	Kept	Discard
Gulf of Maine (Statistical areas 511 - 515)					Wolffish	2	2	-	-
Bass, Striped	2	2	-	-	George's Bank (Stat areas 522, 525, 526, 561, 562)				
Bluefish	3	3	3	3	Bluefish	3	3	3	3
Cod, Atlantic	1	1	1	1	Cod, Atlantic	1	1	1	1
Cusk	3	3	3	3	Cusk	3	3	3	3
Dogfish, Spiny	2	2	-	-	Dogfish, Spiny	2	2	-	-
Flounder, Am. Plaice	2	2	2	2	Flounder, Am. Plaice	2	2	2	1
Flounder, Winter	2	2	2	2	Flounder, Witch	2	2	2	2
Flounder, Witch	1	1	2	3	Haddock	1	1	1	1
Flounder, Yellowtail	2	2	2	2	Hake, Red	3	3	-	-
Haddock	1	1	1	1	Hake, Silver	3	3	-	-
Hake, Red	3	3	-	-	Hake, White	1	1	1	1
Hake, Silver	3	3	-	-	Monkfish	1	1	1	1
Hake, White	1	1	1	1	Pollock	1	1	1	1
Mackerel, Atlantic	3	3	3	3	Redfish	2	2	2	2
Monkfish	1	1	1	1	Skate, Barndoor	3	3	-	-
Pollock	1	1	1	1	Skate, Little	2	2	-	-
Redfish	2	2	2	2	Skate, Rosette	3	3	-	-
Skate, Barndoor	-	2	-	-	Skate, Smooth	2	2	-	-
Skate, Little	2	2	-	-	Skate, Thorny	-	2	-	-
Skate, Smooth	-	3	-	-	Skate, Winter	2	2	-	-
Skate, Thorny	-	2	-	-	Wolffish	2	2	-	-
Skate, Winter	2	2	-	-					

GILLNET AND BEACH SEINE SAMPLING PRIORITIES

GILLNET AND BEACH SEINE SAMPLING PRIORITIES

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Table 1a. (Con't) Length frequency and age structure sampling priorities in gillnet and beach seine fisheries.

Species	Length Frequencies		Age Structures		Species	Length Frequencies		Age Structures	
	Kept	Discard	Kept	Discard		Kept	Discard	Kept	Discard
Cape Cod (Statistical area 521)					Southern New England (Statistical areas 537-539)				
Bass, Striped	3	3	-	-	Bass, Striped	3	3	-	-
Bluefish	3	3	3	3	Bluefish	3	3	3	3
Cod, Atlantic	1	1	1	1	Cod, Atlantic	2	2	2	2
Cusk	3	3	3	3	Dogfish, Spiny	2	2	-	-
Flounder, Winter	2	2	2	2	Flounder, Winter	3	3	3	3
Haddock	2	2	1	1	Mackerel, Atlantic	3	3	3	3
Hake, Red	3	3	-	-	Monkfish	1	1	1	1
Hake, Silver	3	3	-	-	Skate, Barndoor	-	2	-	-
Hake, White	1	1	1	1	Skate, Clearnose	3	3	-	-
Mackerel, Atlantic	3	3	3	3	Skate, Little	2	2	-	-
Monkfish	1	1	1	1	Skate, Rosette	3	3	-	-
Pollock	1	1	1	1	Skate, Smooth	2	2	-	-
Redfish	2	2	2	2	Skate, Thorny	-	2	-	-
Skate, Barndoor	-	2	-	-	Skate, Winter	2	2	-	-
Skate, Little	2	2	-	-	Tautog	3	3	-	-
Skate, Smooth	-	2	-	-					
Skate, Thorny	-	2	-	-					
Skate, Winter	2	2	-	-					
Tautog	3	3	-	-					
Wolffish	2	2	-	-					

OTTER and SHRIMP TRAWL SAMPLING PRIORITIES

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- **Every haul** should be observed, *i.e.* complete catch information for both kept and discarded species is recorded.
- Collection of length frequencies and age structures should occur **at least** after every other observed haul.
- If catches are light and time permits, the observer should sample every haul.
- Otter trawl fishery: obtain actual weights for as many species as possible.
- Shrimp trawl fishery: obtain actual weights for all discarded species.

If it is not possible to biologically sample a particular haul according to protocol, the reason(s) should be noted in the comments section of the corresponding [Haul Log](#).

Table 1b. Length frequency and age structure sampling priorities in the otter trawl fishery.

Species	Length Frequencies		Age Structures		Species	Length Frequencies		Age Structures	
	Kept	Discard	Kept	Discard		Kept	Discard	Kept	Discard
Gulf of Maine (Statistical areas 511-515)					George's Bank (Statistical areas 522, 525, 526, 561, 562)				
Bluefish	3	3	3	3	Bluefish	3	3	3	3
Cod, Atlantic	1	1	1	1	Butterfish	3	3	3	3
Cusk	2	2	1	1	Cod, Atlantic	1	1	1	1
Dogfish, Spiny	2	2	-	-	Cusk	2	2	1	1
Flounder, Am. Plaice	1	1	1	1	Dogfish, Spiny	2	2	-	-
Flounder, Winter	2	2	2	2	Flounder, Am. Plaice	2	2	2	2
Flounder, Witch	1	1	1	2	Flounder, Sand Dab	2	2	2	2
Flounder, Yellowtail	1	1	2	2	Flounder, Summer	2	2	2	2
Haddock	1	1	1	1	Flounder, Winter	1	1	1	1

Hake, Red	3	3	-	-
Hake, Silver	3	3	-	-
Hake, White	1	1	1	1
Herring, Atlantic	2	2	-	-
Monkfish	1	1	1	1
Pollock	1	1	1	1
Redfish	2	2	2	2
Skate, Barndoor	-	2	-	-
Skate, Little	2	2	-	-
Skate, Smooth	-	3	-	-
Skate, Thorny	-	2	-	-
Skate, Winter	2	2	-	-
Wolffish	2	2	-	-

Flounder, Witch	2	2	2	2
Flounder, Yellowtail	1	1	2	2
Haddock	1	1	1	1
Hake, Red	3	3	-	-
Hake, Silver	3	3	-	-
Hake, White	1	1	1	1
Herring, Atlantic	2	2	-	-
Lobster, American	2	2	-	-
Monkfish	1	1	1	1
Ocean Pout	2	2	-	-
Pollock	1	1	1	1
Redfish	2	2	2	2
Skate, Barndoor	-	2	-	-
Skate, Little	2	2	-	-
Skate, Smooth	-	2	-	-
Skate, Thorny	-	2	-	-
Skate, Winter	2	2	-	-
Squid, Atl. Long-fin	3	3	-	-
Squid, Short-fin	3	3	-	-
Wolffish	2	2	-	-

OTTER and SHRIMP TRAWL SAMPLING PRIORITIES

OTTER and SHRIMP TRAWL SAMPLING PRIORITIES

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Table 1b. (Con't) Length frequency and age structure sampling priorities in the otter trawl fishery.

Species	Length Frequencies		Age Structures		Species	Length Frequencies		Age Structures	
	Kept	Discard	Kept	Discard		Kept	Discard	Kept	Discard
Cape Cod (Statistical area 521)					Southern New England offshore (Statistical area 537)				
Bluefish	3	3	3	3	Bluefish	3	3	3	3
Butterfish	3	3	3	3	Bonito	3	3	-	-
Cod, Atlantic	1	1	1	1	Butterfish	3	3	3	3
Cusk	2	2	1	1	Cod, Atlantic	2	2	2	2
Flounder, Sand Dab	2	2	2	2	Dogfish, Spiny	2	2	-	-
Flounder, Summer	1	1	1	1	Flounder, Sand Dab	2	2	2	2
Flounder, Winter	1	1	1	1	Flounder, Summer	1	1	1	1
Flounder, Yellowtail	1	1	1	1	Flounder, Winter	1	1	1	1
Haddock	2	2	1	1	Flounder, Yellowtail	1	1	2	2
Hake, Red	3	3	-	-	Hake, Red	3	3	-	-
Hake, Silver	3	3	-	-	Hake, Silver	2	2	-	-
Hake, White	1	1	1	1	Herring, Atlantic	2	2	-	-
Herring, Atlantic	2	2	-	-	Mackerel, Atlantic	2	2	2	2
Mackerel, Atlantic	3	3	3	3	Monkfish	1	1	1	1
Monkfish	1	1	1	1	Ocean Pout	3	3	-	-
Pollock	1	1	1	1	Scup	1	1	1	1
Redfish	2	2	2	2	Sea Bass, Black	1	1	1	1

Skate, Barndoor	-	2	-	-
Skate, Little	2	2	-	-
Skate, Smooth	2	2	-	-
Skate, Thorny	-	2	-	-
Skate, Winter	2	2	-	-
Squid, Atl. Long-fin	2	2	-	-
Squid, Short-fin	2	2	-	-
Tautog	3	3	-	-
Wolffish	2	2	-	-

Skate, Barndoor	-	2	-	-
Skate, Clearnose	3	3	-	-
Skate, Rosette	3	3	-	-
Skate, Little	2	2	-	-
Skate, Smooth	3	3	-	-
Skate, Thorny	-	2	-	-
Skate, Winter	2	2	-	-
Squid, Atl. Long-fin	1	1	-	-
Squid, Short-fin	2	2	-	-
Tautog	3	3	-	-

OTTER and SHRIMP TRAWL SAMPLING PRIORITIES

OTTER and SHRIMP TRAWL SAMPLING PRIORITIES

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Table 1b. (Con't) Length frequency and age structure sampling priorities in the otter trawl fishery.

Species	Length Frequencies		Age Structures		Species	Length Frequencies		Age Structures	
	Kept	Discard	Kept	Discard		Kept	Discard	Kept	Discard
Mid-Atlantic offshore (Statistical areas 616, 622, 623, 626, 627, 632, 636)					Mid-Atlantic inshore (Statistical areas 538, 539, 611-615, 621, 625, 631, 635)				
Alewife	3	3	-	-	Alewife	3	3	-	-
Bluefish	3	3	3	3	Bass, Striped	1	1	-	-
Butterfish	3	3	3	3	Bluefish	1	1	1	1
Dogfish, Spiny	2	2	-	-	Croaker, Atlantic	3	3	-	-
Flounder, Sand Dab	2	2	2	2	Dogfish, Spiny	1	1	-	-
Flounder, Summer	1	1	1	1	Drum, Black	3	3	-	-
Hake, Red	3	3	-	-	Drum, Red	3	3	-	-
Hake, Silver	2	2	-	-	Flounder Sand Dab	1	1	1	1
Herring, Atlantic	1	1	-	-	Flounder, Summer	1	1	1	1
Herring, Blueback	3	3	-	-	Flounder, Winter	1	1	1	1
Mackerel, Atlantic	2	2	2	2	Flounder, Yellowtail	1	1	1	1
Monkfish	1	1	1	1	Herring, Atlantic	2	2	-	-
Scallop, Sea	3	3	3	3	Herring, Blueback	2	2	-	-
Scup	1	1	1	1	Lobster, American	2	1	-	-
Sea Bass, Black	1	1	1	1	Mackerel, Atlantic	2	2	2	2
Shad, American	3	3	-	-	Mackerel, Spanish	3	3	-	-
Skate, Barndoor	-	2	-	-	Menhaden, Atlantic	3	3	2	2

Skate, Clearnose	2	2	-	-
Skate, Little	2	2	-	-
Skate, Rosette	2	2	-	-
Skate, Smooth	3	2	-	-
Skate, Thorny	-	2	-	-
Skate, Winter	3	3	-	-
Squid, Atl. Long-fin	1	1	-	-
Squid, Short-fin	2	2	-	-
Weakfish	3	3	-	-

Monkfish	1	1	1	1
Scup	2	2	2	2
Sea Bass, Black	1	1	1	1
Shad, American	3	3	-	-
Skate, Clearnose	2	2	-	-
Skate, Little	2	2	-	-
Spot	3	3	-	-
Tautog	3	3	-	-
Weakfish	1	1	-	-

OTTER and SHRIMP TRAWL SAMPLING PRIORITIES

OTTER and SHRIMP TRAWL SAMPLING PRIORITIES

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Table 1c. Length frequency and age structure sampling priorities in the shrimp trawl fishery**.

Species	Length Frequencies		Age Structures		Species	Length Frequencies		Age Structures	
	Kept	Discard	Kept	Discard		Kept	Discard	Kept	Discard
Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Maine									
Cod, Atlantic	*	1	*	1	Monkfish	1	1	1	1
Flounder, Am. Plaice	*	1	*	1	Ocean Pout	*	1	*	1
Flounder, Sand Dab	*	2	*	2	Pollock	*	1	*	1
Flounder, Winter	*	1	*	1	Redfish	*	1	*	1
Flounder, Witch	*	1	*	1	Skate, Barndoor	-	2	-	-
Flounder, Yellowtail	*	1	*	1	Skate, Little	2	2	-	-
Haddock	*	1	*	1	Skate, Smooth	-	3	-	-
Hake, Red	*	3	*	-	Skate, Thorny	-	2	-	-
Hake, Silver	*	2	*	-	Skate, Winter	2	2	-	-
Hake, White	*	2	*	2	Wolffish	3	3	-	-
Herring, Atlantic	2	2	-	-					
Lobster, American	2	1	-	-					

* As of 1 January 1994, regulations mandate the use of a Nordmore Grate in all Shrimp Trawl gear which reduces finfish bycatch. Since none of these species may currently be kept, measurement of **all** discards should occur when time permits.

** All weight measurements for discarded species should be actual in this fishery.

VOLUMETRIC MEASURES OF SCALLOP MEATS

- ➔ **On the first haul of each watch only**, the volume of meats corresponding to the length frequency sample from the **kept** portion of the catch (whole scallops) should be measured.
- ➔ The volume of this sample must represent the meats of **all kept and measured** animals.

If it is not possible to biologically sample a particular haul in the manner outlined above, the alternate sampling method followed should be recorded in the comments section of the corresponding [Haul Log](#).

Table 1d. Length frequency and age structure sampling priorities in the scallop fishery.

Species	Length Frequencies		Age Structures	
	Kept	Discard	Kept	Discard
Flounder, NK	3	3	2	2
Flounder, Summer	2	2	1	1
Flounder, Yellowtail	2	2	1	1
Monkfish	2	2	1	1
Scallop, Sea	1	1	-	-
Skate, Barndoor	-	2	-	-
Skate, nk	3	3	-	-

SCALLOP FISHERY SAMPLING PRIORITIES

BOTTOM LONGLINE FISHERY SAMPLING PRIORITIES

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- **Every haul** should be observed, *i.e.* complete catch information for both kept and discarded species is recorded.
- Collection of length frequencies and age structures should occur **at least** during/after every other observed haul.
- If catches are light and time permits, the observer should sample every haul.
- If commercially important bycatch is caught in significant quantities, yet the species are not listed in Table 1f, refer to Table 2. Groundfish and Shellfish Sampling Requirements By Species For Domestic Fisheries.

If it is not possible to biological sample on a particular haul, the reason(s) should be noted in the comments section of the corresponding Haul Log.

For biological sampling priorities in the pelagic longline fishery see Table 3. Pelagic Species Length Frequency Sampling Requirements for Domestic Fisheries.

Table 1f. Length frequency and age structure sampling priorities in the bottom longline fishery.

Species	Length Frequencies		Age Structures		Species	Length Frequencies		Age Structures	
	Kept	Discard	Kept	Discard		Kept	Discard	Kept	Discard
Gulf of Maine (Statistical areas 464, 465, 467, 511-515) and Georges Bank (Statistical areas 521, 522, 525, 526, 541-543, 561, 562)									
Cod, Atlantic	1	1	3	2	Hake, White	1	1	1	1
Cusk	1	1	2	2	Monkfish	1	1	1	1
Haddock	1	1	3	2	Pollock	1	1	3	2
Hake, Red	2	2	-	-	Wolffish	2	2	-	-
Hake, Silver	2	2	-	-	Skate, nk	2	2	-	-
Skate, Barndoor	-	1	-	-					
Skate, Thorny	-	1	-	-					

Species	Length Frequencies		Age Structures		Species	Length Frequencies		Age Structures	
	Kept	Discard	Kept	Discard		Kept	Discard	Kept	Discard
Southern New England (Statistical areas 533, 534, 537-539)					Mid-Atlantic (Statistical areas 611-616, 621-629, 631-639)				
Cod, Atlantic	1	1	3	2	Flounder, Summer	1	1	1	1
Flounder, Summer	1	1	1	1	Hake, Red	2	2	-	-
Hake, Red	2	2	-	-	Monkfish	1	1	1	1
Monkfish	1	1	1	1	Tilefish	1	1	1	1
Skate, Barndoor	-	1	-	-	Skate, nk	2	2	-	-
Skate, nk	2	2	-	-					

BOTTOM LONGLINE FISHERY SAMPLING PRIORITIES